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FROM BRIDGEPORT TO RINGGOLD

BY WAY OF

Lookout Mountain,

BY

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IN the suppression of the great Rebellion the military situation in the autumn of 1863 was extremely critical. In a broad sense there was a general line of battle extending from Eastern Virginia, the Union left, to Middle Tennessee, the Union right, with Knoxville in Eastern Tennessee as the centre.

On the left the condition was almost one of temporary paralysis in both contending forces. Gettysburg had just passed ; but Gettysburg was a victory for the Union in a negative or defensive sense only. Meade's campaign was purely a defensive one, Lee's offensive ; and when the two forces came together

each put forth the supreme effort,— and Meade held on. That was all.

At Knoxville in the centre Burnside, ever cheerful and confident, was far less concerned about himself than other commanders, and the government were anxious about him.

On the right Chickamauga had more than offset Gettysburg; the Union army had been desperately defeated, and was hard pressed and besieged in Chattanooga. Technically the Union right had been turned. The reparation of this disaster was the immediate problem and work of the Union commanders. Supplies must be got into Chattanooga and the siege raised, or the place and its army be surrendered and Middle Tennessee abandoned. Prompt and effective action was imperatively demanded.

On Tuesday, Sept. 22, 1863, the Twelfth Corps of the Army of the Potomac, then on the Rapidan and Rappahannock Rivers in Virginia, began to take eight days' rations, and received orders to be ready to move at an hour's notice. At midnight on the following Friday, it was generally known that our destination was Chattanooga, and that the Elev-

enth Corps was going also. The bearers of the *Star* and the *Crescent*, under command of General Hooker, had been assigned to the work of repairing the disaster of Chickamauga.

It were the task of a skillful word-painter to depict the emotions of those men who had been together in the rush of Antietam, amid the turmoil and confusion of Chancellorsville and at the mighty shock of Gettysburg, when they realized that they were to part from the Army of the Potomac and were to bear their insignia amid new and distant scenes and unfamiliar comrades. But the fact of their selection for the arduous undertaking flattered the pride of their veteran hearts, and their abiding faith in old Hooker and affection for him assured their confidence and awakened their enthusiasm. It is a noteworthy fact that in the transportation of those two *corps d'armée*, numbering 23,000 men, from Virginia to Tennessee, 1,200 miles, the desertions were so inconsiderable as not to be noticed. The complete transfer took nearly a month, though all the troops, artillery and trains were south of the Ohio and beyond Nashville in ten days. Most of the

longer period was consumed south of Nashville, for the country was infested with guerrillas, and the single line of railway was frequently cut, and sometimes at once both before and behind the same train. The brigade with which I was connected was delayed in Murfreesboro some two weeks ; and we had " the freedom of the city," if not " in a gold snuff-box," yet with all the essentials. The brigade commander was commandant of the place, and his troops constituted the entire garrison, with the exception of some cavalry and artillery under command of Major Houghtaling, a loyal Tennessean, who, with his cavalry, was an ideal Nimrod toward guerrillas.

The brigade headquarters were established in a fine well-furnished house on the corner of College and Academy streets, and we were attentively served by the black servants of the family. The three young ladies of the family, however, were cool, not to say uncivil. Although we dined at their table, they would not break bread with us ; their piano was silent, for they would not play " Yankee Doodle," and they dared not play " Dixie " ; and even a staff-officer's brand-new uniform, well garnished with gold

lace, utterly failed to make any favorable impression upon their obdurate hearts. Undoubtedly they hated us. They were different in their manner from a young woman whom I found the next summer up in the mountains at Altoona Gap ; who, when I spoke to her of the hope of peace in the nation after a while and a return to the calm felicities of domestic life, replied, " Yes, but you uns has killed off all the men. Will you uns come here then and marry we uns ? "

But let us return for a moment to Virginia. The Third Brigade of the Second Division of the Twelfth Army Corps were the last troops to take the cars at Bealton Station, on the Alexandria Railroad. As one of the aides of the commander of that brigade it was my duty to look after the assignment of the troops to the cars. The men were all loaded and the last train moved away from Bealton at half-past one, September 28th, and the same men crossed the Tennessee at Bridgeport, Ala., October 27th, on their march from Bridgeport to Ringgold by way of Lookout Mountain.

A glance at the situation in and around the be-

leagured city of Chattanooga may well be taken here. The city is on the left bank of the Tennessee River, partly on the bluff and partly on the plain which stretches off eastward to Missionary Ridge. Standing by the river in Chattanooga and looking over the plain eastward, the spectator sees in front, some two miles off, Orchard Knob; beyond that to the left, some four or five miles away, the north end of Missionary Ridge, around which pass the railroad to Atlanta and the Dalton Turnpike. Here is the rebel right. Turning now to his right his eye follows the rebel line along the crest of Mission Ridge to Rossville Gap, then sharp to the right again he follows that line across the lowland to where rise the rough craggy sides and towering palisades of Lookout Mountain. Here on side and summit is the rebel left. The Tennessee flowing south past Chattanooga to the base of Lookout, turns there sharply around to the west and north and flows back in the last direction some miles, making a peninsula called Moccasin Point. On the west side of Moccasin Point and due west of Chattanooga is Brown's Ferry. The river runs on north, and then, bending around

Raccoon Mountain, comes back again in a southerly direction some eight miles, when it turns to the east. Just at this turn is Kelley's Ferry. From Kelley's Ferry is a tolerable road through Pan Gap in the Raccoon Mountains to Brown's Ferry, distance about eight miles. From Brown's Ferry across Moccasin Point is an easy road into Chattanooga, distance two and a half miles. Kelley's Ferry and Brown's Ferry at this time were both in possession of the enemy, and the latter was considerably fortified and the former strongly picketed.

The railroad from Bridgeport approaches the Tennessee at the base of Lookout, and running between the mountain and the river, follows the river up to Chattanooga. There is also a good wagon road from Wauhatchie, a railroad junction in Lookout Valley, along the river to Brown's Ferry. The railroad, the river and the wagon road on the left bank of the river are the only ways of communication between Bridgeport and Chattanooga that were then at all practicable; and these were all in the hands of the enemy. The only other roads were little better than mule paths, and lay on the south of the river from Jasper

over Walden's Ridge into Chattanooga, the shortest at least fifty miles, and passable only in good seasons of the weather. What supplies Thomas, shut up in the city, had received for over a month, had been transported on mules by these last named paths. But now these paths were essentially impassable because of the mud, the mules had starved to death, and although communication was had by couriers, and small parties could get into and out of Chattanooga, the transportation of supplies was impossible and had ceased.

The base of Lookout was well fortified with entrenchments supplied with artillery; on the slopes were entrenched camps, and on the summit were siege guns, which commanded Moccasin Point and had Chattanooga and the Union camp within long range. The besieged were simply grouped within the fortifications of the town. The fact that on the retreat from Chickamauga Rosecrans huddled his army in the town and abandoned Lookout, shows beyond question the utter demoralization which must have seized him as well as the routed portions of his forces. Thomas must have gone into the town, be-

cause he could not cope alone with his pursuers. A month later on the north and west were impassable mountains, on the east and south the victorious enemy; within the contracted lines a very scanty supply of ammunition, not enough for a general engagement. The animals were most all dead, and by the 20th of October there were absolutely not a day's rations in Chattanooga. Half rations and lesser quantities had been issued for weeks, and on that day the last pound of food had been given out. Thomas' heroic message, "I will hold the town till we starve," had been sent long before, and the stern reality of his anticipation was upon him. Within thirty miles there were food and ammunition in large quantities, but those thirty miles were almost as impassable as the ocean. Thomas could not get out. Could we get in in time?

It was during this state of affairs that Jefferson Davis had visited the scene, had gazed from the summit of Lookout down into the valley below, had complacently observed that inevitably the place must surrender in a day or two, and had agreed with Bragg that a little more time would work quite as

effectively, and far less expensively than an assault, the complete capture of the imprisoned army.

The plan of relief for the contingent from the Army of the Potomac to carry out was to move into Lookout Mountain Valley along the mountain and the Tennessee River up to Brown's Ferry, so as to cover and protect the river and Kelley's Ferry, and the Pan Gap road between the ferries. Steamboats were then to bring up transportation and supplies to Kelley's, whence the wagons were to cross Raccoon Mountain to Brown's, eight miles, thence again over the river and across Moccasin Point into Chattanooga, two miles and a half. By the river from Bridgeport to Kelley's was about thirty miles, but the route was a sufficient line if it could be used unmolested.

The operations of Smith (William F.) and the exploit of Hazen (William B.) on the night of October 27th in floating around the base of Lookout in pontoons, capturing the rebels at Brown's Ferry and bridging the river there, are well known to the readers of the *Century Magazine*.

October 26th, the Eleventh Corps under Howard

crossed on the pontoons at Bridgeport, and on the morning of the 27th a portion of Geary's division of the Twelfth Corps followed. In Geary's command were the Twenty-eighth Pennsylvania, Colonel Rickard commanding, of the First Brigade, Knapp's Independent Battery, four pieces (Pennsylvania), and the Sixtieth, Seventy-eighth, One Hundred and Thirty-seventh and One Hundred and Forty-ninth New York, being a portion of the Third Brigade, and commanded by General George Sears Greene. The rest of this division and the whole of the first division of the Twelfth Corps were guarding or building railroads or earthworks or bridges, or doing any kind of fatigue duty, of which there was abundance.

We made about seven miles to Shell Mound by the afternoon, going slowly because we had a long pontoon train and the roads were very bad. In addition to the mud, there were many rocks in the roads, and the going was continually up and down steep hills. We worked nearly all night in laying the pontoons, and after two or three hours' rest and getting coffee we pushed on at daylight. At Shell

Mound is the Nickajack Cave, where were very considerable saltpetre works, the capture and destruction of which deprived the rebels of a principal source of supply of one ingredient of their gunpowder. The roads were worse than on the day before. The mud was as bad as in the east, yes, worse, deeper and stickier and meaner ; the roads were full of rocks and still more it was continually up hill and down. The leading regiment was moved as slowly as possible, not faster than two miles an hour, and yet the rear of the column struggled along with great effort. The battery was often stuck, and the infantry helped by hauling with ropes through the worst places. Halts for a few minutes were frequently made to let the men breathe, and altogether it was toilsome and tedious enough. We had been three days and nights getting from Murfreesboro to Bridgeport, relaying track, building culverts and bridges, wet by rain all the time, had had one night's sleep in the mud at Bridgeport, and had laid a pontoon bridge the night before this march.

About noon the column reached " Whiteside Gap," a great rent in the hills, through which a road

branched off into the enemy's country. The column was halted and a scouting party of a couple of companies was sent out on this branch road with orders to proceed half a mile or so, return and report. Meanwhile the others rested. Nothing was discovered by this expedition, and the only surprise was that Howard, who with his entire corps was ahead of us, had left this road unguarded. It was the only road by which our line of march could be reached in flank, and certainly was not a safe place to leave unoccupied. So the Sixtieth New York was detached and left to guard this place and protect our rear and line of march.

The rest of the column resumed its way, and before long we came in sight of the palisades of Lookout. The country is wild and picturesque beyond any description that I can give. The mountain runs up from the valley at a slope of from twenty to thirty degrees. Where we first came in, the slope is three or four miles wide, gradually narrowing and growing steeper as it nears the Tennessee, and in places is cut by deep transverse ravines. At the point of the mountain just over the river the bluff

is almost perpendicular for hundreds of feet in height; then there is a plateau of arable land and then a sharp rise to the palisades. The palisades are from twenty-five to one hundred and fifty feet high, a sheer perpendicular wall of rock. The varying height of this wall is caused by the varying rise of the slope, for the top is level, and from where we marched presented a clear horizontal line against the sky. The slope is heavily wooded, both with large timber trees and with much thick undergrowth.

The road was now becoming better; it got pretty level, and the men, refreshed by the rest at "White-side," closed up well, and the column moved at a freer marching pace. Our eyes continually turned to the point of the mountain, for there, distinctly outlined against a background of leaden clouds, was a siege gun, which every little while vomited a shell off into Chattanooga, and seemed to roar to us a grim defiant welcome. With equal clearness we could see, waving back and forth, up and down, sometimes one, sometimes two of the enemy's signal flags. Lookout Mountain was telling Mission Ridge of the advent of the intruder. With field glasses

we could easily see the movements of the gunners and of the men of the signal party. We were in plain sight of them as well, as must have been the Eleventh Corps who preceded us. The situation was exciting and inspiring to the last degree. Our color-sergeants unfurled their flags, our drummers unslung their drums, and the rattle of some loyal tune sounded our answer back at this gate of the rebel stronghold. There was no use in any attempt at concealment, and none was made. They knew we we had come, and we told them then with flag and drum, as we told them before another sun rose with musket and cannon, that we had come to stay.

Well along in the afternoon the road led us into the woods, and after proceeding a couple of miles we were well up to the junction of the Pan Gap road from Kelley's Ferry. It was now getting dark. Kelley's Ferry was covered and without a fight. It indeed seemed strange, and there was a feeling of insecurity. But Howard was ahead of us with the whole Eleventh Corps. But how far we did not know. There had been a little musketry in the afternoon, but nothing to attract special notice. Howard

had probably met a few pickets, who had exchanged shots with his skirmishers, and scud away. If Geary knew, which I doubt, how great a gap there was between us and Howard, he did not make it known to anybody, for no information was received at brigade headquarters. I doubt whether Howard knew where we were. But Geary ordered us to camp for the night.

The wood in which we drew up joined a large open field in front of us, land which had been cultivated, and in that field was a log-house of the poor class of dwelling. The field was perhaps one thousand feet square. On our right was a little hill with a railroad cut through it and then a railroad embankment; on our left we found a swamp with a thick growth of swamp brush. The wagon road passed through the right centre of our line. Back of a slight elevation beside this road the guns were placed in battery, and the caissons closed up. On either side of the battery the Twenty-eighth Pennsylvania was deployed in line of battle. The One Hundred and Forty-ninth New York was put on the same line with a space between, and the two left companies

were refused to face the swamp. In the rear of the space was the One Hundred and Thirty-seventh New York, near the centre of the camp, and the Seventy-eighth New York was faced to the rear across the road we had come. Brigade headquarters were about seventy-five yards behind the left of the front line, and division headquarters were back on the road near the Seventy-eighth. There was no train, not even a load of reserve ammunition, and but a single ambulance. No fires nor lights were allowed, and we ate a cold supper in the dark. A pretty strong detail of picket was sent out on the road in the direction of Howard, and also some to the rear and into the swamp on our flank in the direction of Kelley's Ferry.

General Greene was strongly apprehensive of an attack, and directed his staff to keep their clothes on and the horses to be kept saddled and bridled. At nine o'clock he sent me to Geary to ask whether the troops should sleep on their arms and not take their shoes off. I saw Geary himself and asked the question. He replied, "It is not necessary," and I reported this answer. Nevertheless the order was

issued throughout the brigade, and saved us from being captured, though Ireland's disobedience with respect to his regiment, the One Hundred and Thirty-seventh New York, caused some disorder a few hours later. I carried the order to Ireland in person, but he disregarded it. A little before midnight we were aroused quickly by sharp firing of pickets in our front on the road in the direction of Howard. The Twenty-eighth Pennsylvania, One Hundred and Forty-ninth New York and the battery were in line facing the enemy. They were awake and ready in three minutes. The Seventy-eighth New York was faced about and put across the railroad in the rear of the cut through the hill. Our pickets came in and reported the approach of an attacking column. Before the One Hundred and Thirty-seventh could get their shoes on to run up and fill the space on the right of the One Hundred and Forty-ninth, on account of Ireland's disobedience of orders, we could distinctly hear the tramp of men at the double quick across the open field in front of us. It was so dark that they could not be seen, but they seemed to know our position perfectly. We distinctly heard

the command to those men, "By the left flank!" But before the command of execution was uttered, on our line was, "Battery! Fire!" and the flash of the four guns lighted up our whole front, showing for an instant the line coming toward us. Then in the darkness the flash of the rebel muskets marked their line, and the bullets began to come. Our men replied, but the delay of the One Hundred and Thirty-seventh was making bad work, and the men began to cluster around trees and to carry wounded to the rear. Finally the One Hundred and Thirty-seventh was got into position, and the men made amends for the misconduct of their regimental commander.

While General Greene was riding at the very front, urging the men to stand, and encouraging them by his example, and getting the formation of his brigade orderly and steady, he was struck in the face by a rifle ball, which entered at the left lower corner of his nose and passed diagonally across his mouth, badly breaking his upper jaw and tearing out through his right cheek. He was assisted to his tent, not more than seventy yards in the rear, and his servant

got him again on horseback, and went with him to a house some distance back, where a hospital had been established.

A considerable pioneer corps attached to the brigade had been deployed across the rear about the distance of the headquarters tent to check and drive back men carrying the wounded and any stragglers. Field, line and staff officers kept the men in their places, and soon the men began to shout back in reply to the rebel yells. Then we breathed easier; we knew the line was safe.

Knapp's battery had done its share at Gettysburg, but the way that battery was worked this night was enough to immortalize it if it had never on any other occasion fired a gun. Its flashes lighted up its own position and half the rebel line. We could hear the devils shout, "Shoot the gunners! Shoot the gunners!" It was point-blank business. The lines were not over two hundred yards apart, and the air was literally loaded with death. After the canister was used up, shells were resorted to, and when an annoying fire came from men clustered around the log-house in the open, solid shot were put through that. With the infantry

the officers stripped the dead and wounded of their cap and cartridge boxes and carried them to the line, for the brigade went into that wood with only sixty rounds, and there was no reserve supply. On the right the enemy got a line along the railroad embankment and opened a cross-fire. Rickard with some of his men dragged one of the guns up on to the embankment, doubled shotted it with canister, and ended that demonstration. On the left the rebels got around us in the swamp, but before they had done much their main line fell back, and some of the flanking party came in and surrendered. The firing lasted but a little over an hour, and at the close many of our men had but a single cartridge left. The attacking force went off, leaving their dead and all of their severely wounded.

This was the battle of Wauhatchie, and the first fighting in the west by troops from the Army of the Potomac. We had come to stay, and we stayed, but at a fearful cost. The severity of this affair is best shown by our losses. We had in the fight between 750 and 800 muskets. We lost in killed and wounded 350 officers and men, including General Greene, who

was very severely and dangerously wounded. The battery lost four commissioned officers, all that were with it, one of them (a son of Geary), either killed outright or mortally wounded, and all its men and non-commissioned officers, except one sergeant and men enough to man one gun ; and lost also thirty-seven out of forty-eight horses. When the firing ceased the Seventy-eighth New York, which had not been used, was deployed in single rank on our line of battle, details were made to search among the dead and wounded for ammunition, a line of skirmishers was advanced, and the rest, including the pioneer corps, went to throwing up intrenchments. About two A. M. there was a disturbance on our picket line, and we stood to arms again. Presently messengers from Howard came in, and he had connected with us. The firing had attracted his attention, a brigade had been started to our relief, had gallantly captured the ambuscade laid for it, and word had been got through to us.

The importance of this affair and of our holding on lies in the fact that the capture of us naturally would have resulted in closing the road to Kelley's

Ferry, in the capture of the ferry and the supplies there, and in shutting Howard into Chattanooga. Soon after daylight reinforcements were poured in in great numbers, and our men were moved out of the trenches. About two P. M. the rebels opened on us from the top of Lookout with two or three thirty-pounders. In about an hour they got our range, and threw shells into our camp till dark, but the only results were the knocking down of some stacks of muskets and the killing of one horse and one man.

The next day our brigade was moved on to the side of Raccoon Mountain, and the time till late in November was busily spent in making a complete fortified camp. We held the extreme right of the line. Building earthworks was the occupation of the day, and vigilant watching on picket of the night. There was a great deal of rain, the weather grew quite cold, and both men and animals suffered much from want of food. The regiments were disposed in earthworks on different hills, batteries were arranged to sweep every road and ravine, a system of signals by flag or torch was devised, so that headquarters

and each regiment could instantly communicate by day or night. Our trains came up, men and animals were housed, and we felt that we were settled for the winter. But this was not yet to be.

November 22d, on my return from guard mounting, I found the brigade ordered to move at daylight the next morning. During the day Sherman's men, the Fifteenth Corps, passed our picket line and went on through the field of Wauhatchie toward Chattanooga. At midnight the order to move was countermanded. All the next day and night there was firing, sometimes sharp and heavy, all along the line, from the head of Lookout to our left beyond Orchard Knob toward the north end of Mission Ridge. Ireland, then commanding the brigade, was tremendously nervous and excited. At one A. M., November 24th, he was ordered to report in person at division headquarters. He was gone two hours, and on his return woke me up, and told me to get the brigade under arms at once, for we were going to storm Lookout Mountain. Reveille was sounded, breakfast eaten, 100 rounds per man distributed, and, leaving the Seventy-eighth to guard the camp, the

rest of the brigade at half-past six crossed the field of Wauhatchie, went over Lookout Creek and commenced the toilsome ascent of the slope. A picket guard of twenty or thirty men was captured at an old mill where we crossed the creek, without firing a shot. The second brigade, Colonel Cobham commanding, led and climbed the slope till its right reached the palisades. We came next in order of the Sixtieth, One Hundred and Second, One Hundred and Thirty-seventh, One Hundred and Forty-ninth. These two brigades made the first line. When they were well closed up, they were faced to the front and ordered to lie down to rest. No opposition had been met, and the enemy could not have dreamed of our presence on the mountain. The brigade commanders, their staff officers and the regimental commanders were summoned to Geary's presence on the safe side of the creek. He made a speech, in which he expatiated on our undertaking, told us of the dangers we should undoubtedly encounter, said something about success and glory, directed us to sweep along the slope and push the enemy off, observed cheerfully that he was not go-

ing up then but would come up later, shook hands with us all, and bade us good bye. We recrossed the creek and went to our posts. Some remembered that when Geary's division was in sore straits at Gettysburg, he was miles away on the Taneytown road, and they thought of it then, and remembered too that less than a month ago, in that dark and bloody wood at Wauhatchie, there was no word from Geary till the firing had ceased and the only sounds on the field were the digging of entrenchments and the cries of the wounded.

We had scarcely got arranged in the places assigned to us when the bugle sounded, "Forward!" Major Elliott, of the One Hundred and Second, was ordered to deploy his regiment as skirmishers for our brigade front. When they had had time to advance 300 or 400 yards, the line followed. The fog was thick and we could not see far ahead. There was much large timber, in places clear and again thick with small growth and underbrush; there were stones and holes and rocks and ravines; and our progress was necessarily slow if we would preserve any sort of formation. Some considerable time

passed as we moved on in silence, and we must have covered a mile, when the rattle of musketry in front told us the ball had opened, and the tune as usual was the grand march of death ! The line pushed on faster as the firing quickened. The fog was dense and it was impossible to see two hundred yards. Elliott was evidently having all his line could carry, for the firing was very continuous for a skirmish line. Presently we met some men carrying an officer in a blanket, and it was poor Elliott, mortally wounded. He wore a full uniform with a red-lined cape on his overcoat, making a conspicuous mark, and he was the first man hit in this engagement.

Cobham, having clearer ground, had got a little ahead of us, and had commenced firing. We pushed on and overtook our skirmish line and passed over it, meeting an irregular fire from a foe we could not well see, and blazing away ourselves into the fog. The firing increased some, and now and then a man dropped, and we urged the line on faster. The shriek of shells came up from the valley below, passing parallel with our line, and now and then a shell would burst in our front. Rifle balls struck the

trees from the direction of our right, showing that an attempt was making to enfilade us from the palisades, and the fire toward which we were advancing grew sharper. The fog rolled up from the valley and passed over the top of the mountain, clearly revealing us and the enemy. Firing and shouting, the whole line pressed forward, and the work became sharp and hot. At every tree and rock and log in front of us was the flash of a rebel musket; from the palisades above the rebel bullets fell thickly, and up out of the valley came the screeching shells of a friendly battery, trying to enfilade the rebel line and clear our front. We could see the men on the rocks above us and in our front, and the battery far down below.

It was fighting now, for our line had ceased to advance and the men had taken some cover, though the fire did not slacken. Our wing was checked. Cobham above us, meeting with less opposition and far less annoyed by the fire from the palisades above, pushed out and turned his fire on the men in our front. The battery below redoubled its exertions; a fog bank from the valley rolled slowly up the side

of the mountain, shutting the battery and the lower hills out from our sight and from the sight of observers on Raccoon Mountain. This was the first scene of "The Battle above the Clouds."

A little before the fog bank reached us the color-bearers, as by a common impulse, rushed ahead, and with a great shout the whole line broke cover and followed them. On they went in the face of a nasty rain of bullets. The rebels broke and ran and we ran after them, heedless of the bullets from the summit. Into holes, over rocks and stumps and logs, over a slight line of earthworks, past a ravine in which were huddled our foes to the number of two hundred or three hundred, who were speedily made prisoners and put under guard,—through a camp of huts and shelter-tents, and over fires where rebel breakfasts were cooking, on, capturing squads of the fleeing enemy, till the dense fog shut in again over and around us, and we must stop and feel our way. The battery did not change front as fast as we advanced, and it exploded one shell in the line of the One Hundred and Forty-ninth, doing some harm, and others too close in front of us, and for a while threw them to our rear.

Our line was reformed, skirmishers advanced and the movement resumed into the thick fog. Some firing from the palisades annoyed us, and now and then a spherical shell with lighted fuse was tumbled off the palisades to bump down the slope and burst where it might. Moving slowly, we came to easier ground; we had reached the edge of the plateau, though Cobham was still on the slope from the plateau to the palisades.

It grew lighter again and the bullets again began to sing amongst us. The fog seemed to break where we were; we could not see the valley, but it got clear on our level and above us. An earthwork was sighted ahead. Behind the last knoll the line was steadied and well closed up. As we showed over this knoll we were greeted with a sharp fusillade, which developed into a steady fire. Our line stopped and commenced firing. This was not what was wanted, but the resistance was heavy for our light line. Cobham again helped us by his cross-fire. Barnum of the One Hundred and Forty-ninth, shouting to his men to follow him, rushed up the knoll, waving his sword above his head. A bullet

struck his sword arm and it fell by his side, but the line had caught his spirit, and it went on now across good ground and with a regular front. The little white house on the point came in sight; we could see Chattanooga, and the watchers there could see us. All energies were bent to reach the house. Again the rebel line broke and ran. The One Hundred and Forty-ninth cleared the earthworks, the One Hundred and Thirty-seventh passed across the door-yard at the house, meeting with sharp resistance, for three color bearers went down in carrying their flag a distance of fifty yards. The Sixtieth pushed along on the right, and Cobham did great work in sweeping our front with his cross-fire.

In the yard at this farm-house were two Napoleon guns, and their caissons hard by were well supplied with ammunition. Our line here wheeled sharp to the right, following the enemy in plain view, and entered some woods. The fog closed in on us again. The whole of this charge could be plainly seen with glasses from Chattanooga, for while the fog was thick below, shutting in the sides of the mountain, our elevation was in plain sight. It is said that as we

rounded the point in this last rush, the watchers in Chattanooga and on Orchard Knob, anxiously awaiting our appearance, were almost beside themselves with exultation, and that even Thomas so far forgot his gravity as to throw his hat into the air with a great shout.

But though the second scene above the clouds had been presented, the battle was not over. As we got in range of the Summertown road, which runs from the plain up the east side of Lookout, and is perhaps 600 or 800 yards around the point, we came upon a line of fortifications covering that road, which it was worse than useless for our line to attempt to carry. It was a regularly constructed entrenchment, well covered by *abatis* and fully manned by fresh troops; and we met such a fire that our men were halted and took what cover the ground afforded. It was now after 12 o'clock noon, our ammunition was getting low, although we had started with 100 rounds, and our men were very much exhausted. We had charged in line of battle over horrible ground for more than four miles, had been fighting nearly five hours and had sustained very considerable losses.

Up to this time neither Ireland nor any of the staff knew whether there was anything behind us or not. We supposed of course there must be, but nothing had reported. Ireland told me to go back and look for help, and to get a line to relieve us. I went back to the white house, and there found one Brigadier-General Whitaker, who, with a brigade, had got on to the plateau somehow. Whitaker was drunk ; not fighting drunk, but complacently so. His troops were on the plateau, with stacked arms, the men resting. I tried to explain our urgent needs, and implored him to lend us a single regiment. He replied that his troops had carried the mountain, and had gone into camp, and that the battle was over. I hastened to report to Ireland, who went to Whitaker, begging aid. But all the aid that Whitaker would render was to offer a drink out of an enormous flask that he had slung to him. The two had a very sharp quarrel ; but the tipsy brigadier persisted that the battle was over, that he had carried the mountain and that his men had gone into camp. Application was made directly to Whitaker's regimental commanders, but without success. Mean-

while matters were getting serious around the point, and there was on the left only an irregular line of groups of men clustered about rock and trees. But happily our first brigade arrived now, and was large enough to take the place of our entire line. The movement of getting them in and our men out, though somewhat covered by the dense fog, unavoidably attracted the attention of the enemy, and they opened a heavy fire. The lead came fearfully for ten or fifteen minutes, but we accomplished the change with as little loss as could be expected on ground practically open and the lines not more than 250 yards apart. This firing has been spoken of as a charge by the rebels, but they did not come out of their works, firing rather to repel what they imagined was going to be an assault.

The battle was now over, though a little firing continued far into the night. Our brigade was got together on the plateau in the rear, and our losses ascertained. We had lost four field officers and ten line officers, and 150 men. But we had sent to the rear nearly eight hundred prisoners. The brigade was grouped in close column of regiments and arms

stacked. If the men had anything to eat they ate it. I know that the brigade officers had nothing to eat, nor even blankets or overcoats. Occasional shots were exchanged through the fog between our men and the sharpshooters on the palisades, but few of us had either strength or animation enough to feel much interest in that. The fog was very penetrating, it had rained some, we were wet through, and ached with fatigue. Night shut in about us and the darkness was almost impenetrable. A cold rain commenced to fall, freezing as it fell, and our outer clothing was coated with ice. The suffering from cold, fatigue and hunger was extreme. It seemed as if our blood was cold and the last spark of vitality frozen within us. At the slightest attempt to make a fire the sharpshooters on the palisades would open on us, and all attempts were forbidden.

At midnight men came up the mountain bringing ammunition on their backs. Two hundred rounds per man were distributed in our brigade, and the work of aiding at this distracted for awhile my mind from my discomforts. This was completed at two A. M., when the night got clear and very cold. The

disposition made for the morning was to open a steady fire on the palisades, while a column should force the Summertown road at any cost. But the rebels saved us further trouble. As the daylight slowly came on all were awake and watchful and ready. It was quiet on the top; and soon after objects could be seen distinctly; a great shout went up as we saw the Flag of the Union waving from the top of the palisades. At the very point of the mountain a crevice had been formed where men could climb up the rocks one at a time, and some had got up there with a flag. The rebels had retreated in the night, the mountain was abandoned. "The Gibraltar of America" was again in the possession of the nation. We got some hard bread, raw pork and coffee, the first in twenty-four hours, and the last, as it proved, in the next twenty-four. The stuff relished better then than it would now. The atmosphere was as clear as a bell and as the day advanced grew comfortably warm. The view was magnificently grand; the whole field of operations in front of and on Mission Ridge could be taken in at a glance. Away to the northeast we saw the smoke and heard the noise of

battle where Sherman was pounding with all his might. We saw the glistening of rebel muskets along Mission Ridge to Rossville Gap. On the plain in the midst we saw the deployment of the 25,000 who were to break the rebel centre before the sun went down; and looking on to the Tennessee we saw a little steamer, piled high with cracker-boxes and casks of pork and bacon, calmly paddling along toward Chattanooga.

In the forenoon we moved down the Summertown road and out on to the plain toward Rossville Gap. We were assigned to support a large park of artillery, some forty or fifty pieces, and moved slowly with them, for the animals were scarcely able to draw the guns. At Chattanooga Creek we were delayed some hours for the bridge to be replaced, which had been destroyed the night before by the rebels in their retreat from the mountain. The rest of the column forded the creek, but we waited with the artillery for the bridge to be repaired. After we got over, the guns were urged forward and commenced to shell the ridge, meeting with some resistance. The batteries were manœuvered on the plain, throw-

ing shells rapidly on to the hills and advancing as fast as might be. Our brigade slowly followed them, marching in line of battle at right angles with the ridge. Under the most favorable circumstances we beheld Thomas' famous charge upon the rebel centre. We were not more than a mile away, facing his right and slowly closing up to it. The occasional shell and scattering bullets that came over to us went by unheeded. The 25,000 men in three lines were at the foot of the rise. They had 200 yards yet to go. As they moved forward there burst from the crest of Mission Ridge, overlapping their whole front, a line of smoke and sheets of fire and shot and shell. Will they, can they do it? Can men live in that fire? They seem within fifty yards of the rebel line; they falter, they stop, the long lines waver; they give way and go back down on to the plain. Then the firing ceases and the rebels set up their yell. The batteries in front of us are working now with all the might of men. Bullets begin to come thicker our way. Bragg has apparently reinforced his centre. It begins to look as if we should get in too.

But Thomas' men have reformed, and the three lines are again in motion up the hill. With the same rush as before they go and the rebels pour on them again the same torrent of death. Nearly up the line staggers, wavers ! In vain do colors wave and swords flash in the afternoon sunlight ; the line falls back to the foot of the hill. A breathing spell and again the third time they face that work, and for the third time the rebel infantry and artillery turn on them a tornado of destruction. The first line gets nearly up unbroken, though the carnage is awful ; the men stagger, but do not break ; they commence firing ; the second line closes up to the first. Together they move forward, slowly, then they rush, they are on to the works, they are over them, and firing at the fugitives flying down the eastern slope to the rear. The rebel centre is broken ; the firing gradually dies away, last on the left in Sherman's front. The battle of Chattanooga is over ; the great victory is an accomplished fact.

That night we slept in the rebel huts, finding their fires still burning and much of their camp equipage and utensils left behind. Before daylight the next

morning we got our horses, coats, blankets and food, and joined in the pursuit. The head of the column was continually fighting the rebel rear guard. We bivouacked at Pea Vine Creek, sleeping on the ground, and at daylight pushed on again. This was the last day of the pursuit. Osterhaus was ahead and our division next. Some time in the forenoon it became evident that the rebels had made a stand, and we hurried on. Emerging from the woods we came upon a pretty town of a hundred houses or so, two churches, a hotel, a large store-house or two, and a long, low stone building by the railroad, used for a freight depot. Beyond the town was a high hill, and the women from the windows of the houses tauntingly bade us "look there." We looked, and there was the rebel rear guard on the crest, Osterhaus' whole division in line about half way up, where he could neither go on nor come back, our first brigade vainly struggling with great slaughter to get up the left flank, and our second brigade *en echelon* on the right of Osterhaus. We moved up under the cover of the stone depot. Grant and Sherman both stood there talking together quietly, apparently un-

conscious of the sharp fight on the other side of the stone building. Our brigade was presently ordered to seize some buildings across an open field to the right and rear of our second brigade. It was in full sight and good range of the rebels on the hill, but we went across and took the position, losing fifty men while passing over about 400 yards. The first brigade was all cut to pieces, losing 400 men and many of its best officers, all to no purpose, for a couple of batteries soon came up and shelled the rebels out. Capt. Charles T. Greene, assistant adjutant-general of our brigade, had his right leg taken off by a shell while we were crossing the field. The next day a strong column started for Knoxville, for the safety of which place there seemed to be much solicitude.

We remained in this town of Ringgold two or three days, resting and feeding ; and at half-past two on the morning of December 1st, set out on the return march to winter quarters. We moved away by the light of the burning houses, for it was said that Osterhaus' men had been fired on from the windows as they entered the town.

The weather was bitterly cold, the ground frozen hard, the walking never better, and that night, after a march of twenty-eight miles, we slept in our huts on Raccoon Mountain. The campaign was over.

